

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-12 IO-14 ISO-00 H-02 PA-02
PRS-00 SSM-05 PM-05 SSO-00 /061 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:WBHARRIS:DP
APPROVED BY NEA/P:REUNDELAND
S/PRS - MR. CARTER
H - MR. FLATEN
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA - MR. NEUMANN
NEA/IAI - MR. SMITH
NEA/ARN - MR. DRAPER
NEA/EGY - MR. NEWBERRY
NEA/ARP - MR. TWINAM

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O 212350Z FEB 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY JIDDA IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
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USMISSION USNATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

USCINCEUR
DOD
JSC
CIA
USIA
NSC

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CINCEUR FOR POLAD; TEL AVIV FOR PAO, DELIVER BY 9 A.M.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS:PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - FEBRUARY 21, 1978

1. FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS FROM DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING FOR FEBRUARY 21. FYI ONLY, OFFICER PRESENT TODAY WAS HODDING CARTER.

MR. CARTER: I HAVE TWO STATEMENTS HERE. FIRST, DURING THE EARLY MORNING OF FEBRUARY 21 THE HOME OF MR.SAAD EL FISHAWI, UNCLASSIFIED

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IN ARLINGTON, WAS FIREBOMBED. MR. FISHAWI IS A LONG-TIME OFFICIAL AT THE IBRD. THE DEPARTMENT DEPLORES AND CONDEMNS THIS ACT OF VIOLENCE. WE ARE GLAD THAT THE INCIDENT DID NOT RESULT IN INJURY OR SERIOUS DAMAGE TO PROPERTY.

THE DEPARTMENT NOTES WITH DEEP REGRET THAT THIS IS THE SECOND SUCH INCIDENT OF VIOLENCE WITHIN THE PAST WEEK AGAINST AN EGYPTIAN OFFICIAL OF THE IBRD.

THE ARLINGTON POLICE ARE INVESTIGATING THIS INCIDENT AND WE WILL BE FOLLOWING THE MATTER. AT THIS POINT WE HAVE NO FURTHER INFORMATION ON IT.

Q. YOU SAID,"WE WILL BE FOLLOWING THE MATTER." I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

A. SIMPLY AS A MATTER OF INTEREST TO US -- AND I BELIEVE A LEGITIMATE INTEREST AND CONCERN ABOUT THIS KIND OF ATTACK.

Q. DO YOU KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THE GROUP THAT TOOK CREDIT FOR THIS?

A. NO. I ASKED SOMETHING ABOUT THAT, AND FRANKLY, WE AREN'T ANY BETTER OFF AT THIS POINT ON THE INFORMATION THAN SIMPLY THE IDENTIFICATION.

Q. IS THE DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDING THE MIDDLE EAST CITIZENS OF INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, OR DIPLOMATS, GET SPECIAL PROTECTION EITHER FROM LOCAL POLICE OR FEDERAL POLICE?

A. I AM NOT AWARE OF THAT, BUT LET ME PUT THE QUESTION.

Q. HAVE THE EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS IN THE WORLD BANK BEHAVED IN ANY SORT OF CONSISTENT WAY SO AS TO STIR UP ANIMOSITIES?

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A. NO, WE ARE NOT AWARE OF ANY REASON THAT MIGHT BE CITED FOR ANY SUCH THING. AND OF COURSE, THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR TERRORISM.

Q. THERE IS JUST NO RHYME OR REASON TO IT THAT YOU CAN DETECT?

A. NO.

SECOND, THE UNITED STATES STRONGLY CONDEMNS THE TERRORIST ACTS IN CYPRUS WHICH INVOLVED THE MURDER OF YUSUF AL-SIBAI, THE EDITOR OF THE EGYPTIAN DAILY NEWSPAPER AL-AHRAM, AND FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE AFRO-ASIAN PEOPLES SOLIDARITY ORGANIZATION; THE TAKING OF HOSTAGES AND THE COMMANDEERING OF A CYPRUS AIRWAYS AIRCRAFT.

THIS LATEST TERRORIST OUTRAGE REINFORCES THE GROWING SENTIMENT THROUGHOUT THE WORLD FOR STRONGER MEASURES AND CLOSER INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO PREVENT FUTURE INCIDENTS OF THIS KIND.

WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE FACT THAT A NUMBER OF GOVERNMENTS REFUSE TO ALLOW A COMMANDEERED CYPRIOT AIRCRAFT TO LAND, THUS MAKING IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE TWO TERRORISTS TO OBTAIN SANCTUARY AND CREATING CONDITIONS FOR THE RETURN OF THE AIRCRAFT TO CYPRUS.

THIS IS NOT A FORMAL PART OF THE STATEMENT. I WOULD

SIMPLY OBSERVE HERE THAT IT WOULD BE INAPPROPRIATE FOR ME TO COMMENT ON THE EVENTS WHICH IMMEDIATELY PRECEDED THE SURRENDER OF THE TERRORISTS AT LARNACA AIRPORT, AND THE RELEASE OF THE HOSTAGES, AND I WILL SIMPLY BE UNABLE TO DO
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SO.

Q. BUT COULD YOU COMMENT WHETHER AT ANY POINT THE U.S. WAS TOLD, OR KNEW, OR HAD ANY INDICATION THAT THE EGYPTIAN

MAY SEND, OR WOULD SEND, THIS COMMANDO PILOT TO CYPRUS?

A. I DON'T THINK THAT THE QUESTION AROSE. I DOUBT THAT I WOULD BE ABLE TO TELL YOU THAT. BUT I WILL CHECK ON IT.

Q. THEY USED A C-130, I BELIEVE.

A. YES.

Q. DID THEY REQUEST U.S. PERMISSION FOR THE LANDING?

A. WOULD THAT QUESTION NECESSARILY HAVE TO ARISE? I MEAN, FOR AN OPERATION LIKE THAT? I DON'T KNOW. I WILL CHECK. IT'S JUST THAT NOTHING OCCURS TO ME AS BEING NECESSARY.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY COMMENT OF ANY KIND ON THE ATTITUDE OF THE CYPRIOT GOVERNMENT TO EVENTS OF THIS SORT?

A. NO, I DO NOT.

Q. WHAT IS THE ADMINISTRATION DOING TO TRY TO ENHANCE INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION TO PREVENT TERRORIST ACTS?

A. AS YOU KNOW, WE WORKED VERY HARD IN THE UN TO ATTEMPT TO GET A STRONG STATEMENT ON TERRORIST ACTIVITY IN THE AIR. WHILE WHAT EMERGED WAS NOT AS STRONG AS WE WOULD HAVE LIKED, WE THOUGHT THAT IT WAS AN APPRECIABLE IMPROVEMENT OVER WHAT EXISTED BEFORE.

WE HAVE ALSO BEEN WORKING THROUGH THE INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT ORGANIZATIONS IN EFFORTS TO GET UNIFIED PROCEDURES FOR DEALING WITH, OR CURTAILING THE POSSIBILITY OF UNCLASSIFIED

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TERRORISM IN THE AIR.

THE SECRETARY TESTIFIED AT SOME LENGTH BEFORE THE RIBICOFF SUBCOMMITTEE ON THIS SUBJECT, AND I DON'T REALLY HAVE ALL OF IT IN FRONT OF ME RIGHT NOW, BUT WE ARE PROCEEDING -- AND WITHIN OUR OWN HOUSE, ARE COOPERATING WITH CONGRESS, AND SPECIFICALLY WITH THE LEGISLATION BEING DRAFTED BY THE RIBICOFF SUBCOMMITTEE IN THIS FIELD, IN AN ATTEMPT

TO TIGHTEN OUR OWN PROCEDURES AND TO GIVE US SOME TOOLS FOR DEALING WITH THIS PROBLEM IN THE WORLD AT LARGE.

Q. SINCE THIS WAS THE THIRD TIME IN ABOUT 18 MONTHS THAT FOREIGN TROOPS HAVE BEEN USED IN THIS CASE, COULD YOU SAY WHAT IS THE U.S. POLICY NOW ON THIS SORT OF ACTION - COMMANDO RAIDS, DELIVERY OF HOSTAGES?

A. NO. I WOULD JUST HAVE TO SAY THAT I DO NOT HAVE A

GENERAL POLICY STATEMENT. CLEARLY, THE CIRCUMSTANCES OF EACH ONE OF THE RAIDS THAT YOU ARE TALKING ABOUT HAS BEEN CONSIDERABLY DIFFERENT, I DON'T KNOW THAT THERE WOULD BE ANY OVERALL STATEMENT THAT I COULD MAKE THAT WOULD APPLY TO ALL THREE.

Q. DO YOU KNOW ON WHOSE BEHALF THESE TWO TERRORISTS WERE WORKING?

A. NO.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA?

A. NO, I DO NOT. I HAVE SEEN SOME CONFLICTING REPORTS ON IT AS TO WHO IT MIGHT BE.
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Q. DO YOU ATTACH SIGNIFICANCE TO THE FACT THAT LIBYA AND PERHAPS SOME OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES WHICH PREVIOUSLY GAVE LANDING RIGHTS TO TERRORISTS, REFUSED TO DO SO THIS TIME?

A. WELL I REPEAT: WE ARE ENCOURAGED BY THE FACT THAT THEY WERE UNABLE TO FIND A SANCTUARY, AND CLEARLY THAT IS A WELCOME SIGN -- ONE WE HAVE BEEN TRYING TO ENCOURAGE FOR SOME TIME.

Q. TO GO BACK TO ANOTHER ANNOUNCEMENT IF I CAN, THE ANNOUNCEMENT ABOUT ATHERTON, DOES THAT MEAN THAT SECRETARY VANCE WILL NO LONGER PLAY A DIRECT ROLE IN THE MEDIATION EFFORTS IN THE MIDDLE EAST?

A. I WOULD EXPECT THAT MR. ATHERTON WILL CONTINUE TO PLAY A VERY SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN THIS. I ALSO EXPECT THAT IF THE PARTIES AT SOME POINT FELT THAT THE SECRETARY'S PRESENCE WAS NECESSARY, THAT HE WOULD CONSIDER THAT AND ACT ON THAT REQUEST.

IT IS CLEAR THAT SECRETARY ATHERTON, BOTH HAS THE WEALTH OF EXPERIENCE AND THE BACKGROUND, WHICH HE HAD PRIOR TO

THIS ANNOUNCEMENT, PLUS JUST THE ADDED WEIGHT OF THIS SPECIAL ROLE AND POSITION. BUT I WOULD NOT SUGGEST FOR A MOMENT THAT THE SECRETARY WILL NO LONGER PLAY ANY ROLE AT ALL.

Q. WOULD HE, FOR EXAMPLE, BE RESERVED FOR EMERGENCY TRIPS TO BREAK DEADLOCKS, AND THINGS OF THAT KIND?

A. I THINK IT'S HARD FOR ME TO GUESS AS TO UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES HE WOULD GO BACK AGAIN. I.E. I AM NEVER SURE WHAT THE DEFINITION OF AN "EMERGENCY" MIGHT BE. BUT

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LET ME PUT IT THE OTHER WAY AROUND. AT THIS POINT THE PLANS ARE FOR MR. ATHERTON TO REMAIN IN THE MIDDLE EAST FOR AN INDETERMINATE AMOUNT OF TIME IN AN ATTEMPT TO GET THIS NEGOTIATING PROCESS FORWARD. AND THERE ARE NO PLANS FOR THE SECRETARY TO GO BACK.

Q. IS THERE ANY REPLACEMENT YET FOR MR. SAUNDERS?

A. I DON'T HAVE AN OFFICIAL ANNOUNCEMENT ON THAT YET.

Q. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THE REPORTS EMINATING FROM THE MIDDLE EAST ON THE NEW SOVIET WEAPON SHIPMENTS TO SYRIA?

A. NO. I HAVE NOTHING NEW ON THAT. IT IS OBVIOUS THAT THIS IS A MATTER WHICH IS GOING TO BE DISCUSSED, THE ARMS RELATIONSHIP, IN PRESIDENT ASAD'S VISIT TO MOSCOW, BUT I DON'T HAVE ANY FIGURES ON THAT.

Q. ANYTHING FROM LEBANON?

A. NO. I HAVE NOTHING NEW ON THAT.

Q. SENATOR CASE MADE A STATEMENT OVER THE WEEKEND THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT HAS APPROVED THE SALE OF TWO TRI-STAR AIRCRAFT TO LIBYA.

A. I HAVE A GUIDANCE THAT COVERS ALMOST ANY QUESTION THAT CAN ARISE ON THAT EXCEPT THAT ONE. WHAT MY GUIDANCE SAYS IS: SENATOR CASE HAS ANNOUNCED THAT THE U.S. IS CUTTING OFF THE SUPPLY OF SPARE PARTS AND RECOMMENDING AGAINST THE EXPORT OF 727'S TO LIBYAN AIRLINES.

NOW, THAT ONE I CAN ANSWER. I DON'T HAVE ANY ANSWER FOR
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THAT; WHETHER WE ARE GOING AHEAD WITH SOMETHING FOR LIBYA.

Q. I AM QUOTING THE ARTICLE THAT THAT WAS THE ANNOUNCEMENT.

Q. WHAT ABOUT SENATOR CASE'S CUT-OFF OF SPARE PARTS?

A. INsofar AS THAT GOES, WE HAVE DECIDED NOT TO ISSUE THE MUNITION CONTROL LICENSES REQUIRED FOR PENDING MAJOR OVERHAULS ON THE EIGHT C-130S WHICH ARE OPERATED BY THE LIBYAN AIR FORCE.

THE DEPARTMENT ALSO IS INFORMING LOCKHEED THAT IT WILL NO LONGER APPROVE THE EXPORT OF SPARE PARTS FOR THESE AIR-

CRAFT NOR THE PROVISION OF ON-SITE MAINTAINENCE BY THE
LOCKHEED TECHNICAL TEAM RESIDENT IN LIBYA.

THE DEPARTMENT ALSO WILL RECOMMEND TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE THAT EXPORT LICENSES FOR TWO 727'S ORDERED BY
LIBYAN AIRLINES NOT BE ISSUED.

THE ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION IS: WE ARE APPROVING THE SALE
OF ONE JETSTAR.

Q. WHICH ONE DIDN'T YOU APPROVE?

A. WE ARE NOT APPROVING TWO 727'S. WE ARE RECOMMENDING
APPROVAL OF AN EXPORT LICENSE FOR ONE JETSTAR, AN EXECUTIVE
JET MANUFACTURED BY LOCKHEED WHICH LIBYAN AIRLINES HAD
EXPRESSED INTEREST IN BUYING.

THESE DECISIONS REFLECT THE U.S. GOVERNMENT'S CONCERN WITH
LIBYA'S CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM,
WHICH MAKES IT INAPPROPRIATE TO PERMIT LIBYA TO ACQUIRE
THE U.S. MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND SERVICES OR FOR THE U.S.
GOVERNMENT TO PERMIT THE EXPORT OF AIRCRAFT WHICH COULD BE
USED TO TRANSPORT TROOPS OR MILITARY EQUIPMENT.
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Q. IS THAT LAST PART ALSO RELATED TO THE SITUATION IN
CHAD?

A. I AM NOT GOING TO SPECIFY THE VARIOUS CATEGORIES OR
AREAS IN WHICH IT IS RELATED. I THINK THAT THE GENERAL
STATEMENT IS GOING TO HAVE TO SPEAK FOR ITSELF.

Q. WOULD WE BE IN FAVOR, THEREFORE, IF LIBYA'S, IN YOUR
WORDS, AS I UNDERSTAND IT, CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR INTER-
NATIONAL TERRORISM? WOULD THE STATE DEPARTMENT BE IN
FAVOR OF SUPPORTING AN INTERNATIONAL EMBARGO AGAINST
LIBYAN COMMERCIAL FLIGHTS OR OTHER SUCH MEASURES TO REACT
AGAINST THE CONTINUING TERRORISM OR EMBARGO OR SOMETHING?

A. I THINK THAT WE HAVE REJECTED SUCH A STEP FOR THE TIME
BEING AND FOR VARIOUS REASONS AND THE REASON I AM PULLING
IT OUT OF MY HEAD NOW AGAIN IS THAT THE SECRETARY TESTI-
FIED ON THIS SUBJECT AND I CAN'T REMEMBER THE EXACT FOR-
MULATION.

Q. WHEN WAS LIBYA NOTIFIED OF THIS?

A. THODAY IS THE 21ST. I WAS NOTIFIED OF IT THE END OF
LAST WEEK.

Q. DO YOU THINK THEN THAT THAT MIGHT HAVE BEEN A FACTOR

IN LIBYA'S DECISION NOT TO LET LAND THE TWO TERRORISTS
IN LIBYA?

A. I REALLY COULDN'T SPECULATE ON THAT. I DON'T KNOW.

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Q. WHEN WERE THE EIGHT C-130S DELIVERED?

A. I DON'T REMEMBER ANY MORE. I REMEMBER I USED TO HAVE
THAT THING WHEN I FIRST GOT HERE. I WILL FIND OUT WHEN
DID THEY GET THE EIGHT C-130S.

Q. IS ANY RETURN OF MONEY INVOLVED? DOES LOCKHEED HAVE
TO PAY THEM BACK FOR NOT PROVIDING SPARE PARTS?

A. I DON'T KNOW. I WILL CHECK.

Q. HAVE THE LIBYANS PROTESTED OVER THIS?

A. I HAVE NO PROTEST HERE.

Q. DO YOU KNOW IF THIS, IN EFFECT, MEANS THE ON-SITE
MAINTAINENCE TEAM MUST RETURN?

A. IT IS MY READING OF THIS THAT THEY SHOULD SINCE THEY
ARE GOING TO BE FORBIDDEN FROM PROVIDING THE MAINTAINENCE
AND MAINTAINENCE PARTS. I SUPPOSE THEY COULD STAY THERE.

Q. I MEAN YOU HAVEN'T CHECKED INTO WHETHER THE EXISTING
CONTRACT EXPIRES SIX OR EIGHT MONTHS FROM NOW AND WHETHER
THEY, THEREFORE, WOULD BE ALLOWED TO GO OUT AT THE END OF
THAT PERIOD?

A. YES. THAT IS A GOOD DETAIL QUESTION: WHEN DOES THIS
ON-SITE THING RUN OUT, IN FACT, AND WILL THEY STAY UNTIL
THE END OF IT OR ARE THEY COMING BACK NOW?

Q. JUST ON THAT POINT. THERE IS NO WAY THAT YOU CAN MAKE
THEM COME BACK; RIGHT?

A. NO. NO. YOU CAN JUST MAKE SURE YOU CAN'T PROVIDE THE
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MAINTAINENCE WITH THE PARTS TO DO THE JOB.

Q. ARE YOU GOING TO STOP EXPORTING TRUCKS AND AUTOMOBILES
TO LIBYA AS WELL?

A. I DON'T KNOW OF THAT QUESTION ARISING AT ALL.

Q. CAN THEY STILL BUY SPARE PARTS, LIKE IN ITALY, WHICH I THINK ALSO MAKES THEM? CAN THEY STILL BUY SOMEWHERE ELSE?

A. I DON'T KNOW THE STATE OF THE LAW ON WHETHER, IN FACT, THAT COULD BE PREVENTED. I HAVE A FEELING THAT THERE ARE PARTS AVAILABLE IN THE INTERNATIONAL OPEN MARKET.

Q. CAN YOU BE ANY MORE SPECIFIC, HODDING, IN WHAT HAS PROMPTED THIS DECISION? WAS IT ANYTHING IN THE RECENT PAST? YOU PUT OUT A VERY GENERAL STATEMENT ABOUT THEIR PAST WILLINGNESS TO HARBOR TERRORISTS. WHAT SPECIFICALLY?

A. I THINK REALLY THE PROBLEM HERE IS CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL TERRORISM. I THINK IN OUR COUNTRY REPORTS WE HAVE ITEMIZED IN THE PAST IN SPEAKING OF LIBYA AND A COUPLE OF OTHERS OF CERTAIN ACTS THAT THEY DO OR DON'T DO IN THIS FIELD. I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANYTHING TO ADD TO THIS.

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<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 26 sep 1999
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DEPARTMENTAL ADMINISTRATION, PRESS SUMMARIES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE044855
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: NEA/P:WBHARRIS:DP
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D780079-0101
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197802120/baaafbxg.tel
Line Count: 460
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 179fb5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 9
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3475960
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - FEBRUARY 21, 1978
TAGS: PFOR, SOPN
To: AMMAN BEIRUT MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/179fb5cf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014